



STATE OF WASHINGTON

COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS COMISIÓN DE ASUNTOS HISPANOS

Brewster
Public Meeting
Minutes
September 20, 2003

Roll Call:

Commissioners present: Leo Gaeta, Diana Avalos, Gabriel Banfi, Homero Tamez, Yvonne Lopez-Morton and Uriel Iñiguez.

Commissioners absent: Edward Davila unexcused, Gabriel Portugal excused, Faviola Barbosa excused and Karla Padilla-Reyna excused.

Staff present: Antonio Ginatta and Vita Echeverria

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Banfi made a motion to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Tamez seconded the motion.

Minutes approved.

Executive Director Comments

Director Ginatta announced that the legislative session had started again, and that our responsibilities to advise the legislature have begun.

There will be a study session tomorrow to discuss what the commission will do for the upcoming legislative session.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Lopez-Morton: Mentioned that Spokane Latino community is starting to grow just like all other communities. They have started to see similar issues in the Hispanic community and that community members have opened a center (El Centro) to identify resources available to the Hispanic community.

Commissioner Avalos: She took part in the planning of the 1st annual Latino festival in Vancouver. She has been involved in meetings with the Vancouver police department and the Youth League. The Youth League provides sports and activities for the youth in the community. Commissioner Avalos has been appointed to the advisory board of

First Books Funding to purchase bilingual and monolingual books. She also announced that the Washington State Patrol would be conducting a community forum on Oct. 13th. Their goal is to bring together community leaders and Latino High School students to talk about the issues.

Commissioner Gaeta: He has spent the last 38 days in South Korea participating in a training exercise for the National Guard. An Oregon group went to Mattawa to start some focus groups to get input from the low-income families on how being limited income affects children and families. The results of the focus group will be put into a report that can be handed over to legislators. Children First will be working together with Children's Alliance to get this report completed. Commissioner Gaeta will be working on a Fundraiser to build a community center in Royal City. He is also involved with the issue of the First Steps Program, this program that provides pre-natal care to pregnant women. A change is going to take place that will affect eligibility for maternity care.

Commissioner Tamez: He has been working with issues involving injured workers. The director of L&I met with people in the community of Pasco in August. L&I appears to be in the process of addressing problems raised at the Pasco meeting. On the weekend of Sept 14th he represented the commission in Yakima during the Fiesta de Independencia. This last week he met with representatives from UW on how to better serve Hispanic families. The purpose of the meeting was to identify ways that families can get their children to go to college.

Commissioner Banfi: He announced that the Bellevue Hispanic community is growing. During the last two years the community has developed the Eastside Latino Forum group. This group has been very active in the Hispanic community. They helped the Consulate of Mexico get the Matricula ID card passed by the city council. This year was the first time that Bellevue had a Hispanic Celebration, Fiestas Patrias. They had an event at the Crossroads mall where they had dancers from Cuba, Chile, Mexico and Peru.

Commissioner Iñiguez: Identified himself as a just-appointed commissioner. Told the community that he came from Michuacan, Mexico as an immigrant and his family came to this country to have a better life. He was raised in Connell, WA and now works for the Department of Corrections.

Break at 7:00pm for 10 minutes.

Leo announced that the dates from September 15th to October 15th are considered National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Public Comments

Cheryl Hanks, Pesticide & Surveillance Section, Department of Health: Her section's mission is to gather information about pesticide to educate the legislature on the results of their studies. The section developed focus groups in Yakima, and all information was kept confidential. The results of the groups were turned into a manual for service providers. A copy of the report on the focus groups was given to each of the commissioners.

Pedro De la Cerda, community member: He wanted to know if the Commission would help the community in discussing a road issue with the Department of Transportation. The issue is that there is a road in town (Bridge Street) on which there have been accidents because there are no sidewalks or crosswalks. Many families use that road by foot to get into town.

Director Ginatta asked if he or someone else could take him to the road tomorrow about 1:00 pm to take pictures of the area. Pedro agreed to take him.

Mr. De la Cerda also said that there are police issues in the area and wanted to know if there was a way to get the numbers of bilingual or Latino office in the local police departments.

Director Ginatta replied that the Commission could provide that information to him at a later time.

Mr. De la Cerda asked what was being done about racial profiling.

Commissioner Banfi stated that the new chief of the State Patrol has mentioned that the State Patrol was the subject of a racial profiling study by WSU, and that the results were that the State Patrol, on the whole, does not racially profile. However, commissioners still hear stories at meetings about profiling. We need to hear from the community about specific instances of profiling, so that we can document them and present them to police agencies. People with specific examples should call the Commission to document their complaint.

Mr. De la Cerda said that the community needs more Latinos in the City Council or in any of the city offices. He mentioned that he would like to see the city hire someone bilingual.

Student concerns: They mentioned that there are not enough interpreters to provide services to the school district. When there are interpreters available they don't always interpret accurately.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.